

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claim 10 has been amended. Accordingly, claims 10-12 are pending in the present application.

The Office Action has requested that Figs. 1 and 4 be labeled as prior art because only that which is old is illustrated. While Applicant has amended Fig. 4 to be labeled as prior art, Applicant respectfully submits that Fig. 1 is not prior art, and should not be labeled as such. In particular, Fig. 1 shows the swivel cuff 147 of the present invention. Although similar reference numeral 147 is used in the U.S. Patent No. 4,792,363, that reference numeral is not a swivel cuff as in Fig. 1 of the present application. Therefore, Fig. 1 should not be labeled as prior art. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this requirement with respect to Fig. 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,792,363 to Franklin, Jr. et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,478,342 to Barfield. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Among the limitations of independent claim 10 which are neither disclosed nor suggested in the art of record is a method of removing dust from a vent which includes “providing a swivel cuff between said vacuum source and an exhaust end of said flexible vacuum conduit so as to minimize torque loads of said flexible shaft, said swivel cuff having a first threaded end for securing said swivel cuff proximal to said vacuum source and a second end adapted to couple and uncouple said swivel cuff from said exhaust end of said flexible vacuum conduit.” Support for this amendment can be found on page 6, lines 3-8.

As admitted on page 3 of the Office Action, Franklin, Jr. et al. neither discloses nor suggests the use of a swivel cuff.

Barfield does not remedy any of the deficiencies of Franklin, Jr. et al. While Barfield discloses the use of a swivel coupling for a vacuum hose, it does not teach or

suggest that the swivel coupling includes a first threaded end. In fact, inasmuch as Barfield discloses that the end 40 of the swivel coupling is attached to the vacuum source via a friction fit, it teaches away from the present invention as defined in independent claim 10. See Barfield at col. 4, lines 24-31.

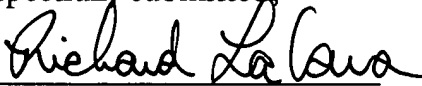
Therefore, even if one were to combine the teachings of Franklin, Jr. et al. and Barfield, one would not arrive at the present invention as defined in independent claim 10. At best, one would arrive at a swivel coupling that attaches to the vacuum source via a friction fit, and not with a threaded end. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 10 patentably distinguishes over the art of record.

Claims 11 and 12 each depend directly from independent claim 10 and include all of the limitations found therein as well as additional limitations which, in combination with the limitations of independent claim 10, are neither disclosed nor suggested in the art of record. Accordingly, claims 11 and 12 are likewise patentable.

In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration of the amendments to Fig. 4, favorable consideration of the amendments to claim 10, and allowance of the present application with claims 10-12 is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet(s) of drawings includes changes to Fig. 4.

Attachment: Replacement sheet